

## Rules Change for Charging Bay Road Septic System Users

By SUSANNA SHEEHAN

Complaints from Bay Road shared septic users have prompted town officials to change how they bill these consumers.

Selectmen this week approved a new formula they hope will more fairly calculate the costs of providing the shared septic system to Bay Rd. users.

Monday night, Michael Botieri of Landing Rd. explained to selectmen that he and the other 28 users of the Bay Rd. shared septic system having been paying more than what they had been told they would when they signed up to use the system.

The Bay Road system carries the household wastewater from 29 homes to a leaching field under the Wadsworth Road playground. It was necessary because the properties are in areas that flood or they don't have enough land for conventional septic systems. In 1999, Town Meeting supported \$914,000 for the design and construction. The system was finished in 2002. Homeowners are repaying this through betterments. They also pay for operation and maintenance.

Botieri presented selectmen with many documents he

received from the town that showed what he thought he'd be paying for. In one case, residents were told they would be paying a yearly fee of \$420, but the bills have been much higher. Botieri felt the regulations should be changed to more fairly reflect charges based on usage by the 29 households.

"We'll pay it, but let's fix it," said Botieri. "Reconsider and do what the town has told us all along."

Selectmen voted unanimously to change the formula for billing Bay Rd. sewer customers. Chairman Andre Martecchini explained that the town had been charging each consumer for administrative costs based on the amount of his or her usage. There was also a minimum fee of \$60 regardless of how much or how little people used the system.

"But that was an unfair practice because the cost of administering the system — billing, supervising, etc. — is really independent of what you use," said Martecchini.

Selectmen changed the formula so the administrative charge is the total administrative costs of the system divided by the number of users in the system, in this case 29. The administrative charge will be spread out on each bill the users receive during a

year. They include the cost of paying employees to oversee the system and legal fees.

In addition to the administrative charge, system users pay a volume rate, which is the total operation and maintenance costs divided by the total wastewater volume used per individual system. Operation and maintenance costs include routine maintenance of the equipment including parts; an annualized cost of pump replacement based on a 10-year pump life; consultant costs associated with inspection, monitoring and repairs; septage handling, transportation and disposal; utility and security costs; and the interest and finance charges from borrowing.

The total wastewater volume per user is based on 80% of the user's total actual water use. Adding the administrative charge with the volume rate equals the total user charge.

Selectmen unanimously accepted these changes to the shared septic system rules and regulations. The changes appear on pages 22-23, in sections 4.3-4.3.3.

In other business, selectmen:

- Met in executive session with Town Counsel Robert Troy to discuss pending litigation. They began the meet-

ing at 7:05 p.m. and ended at 7:41 p.m. All three selectmen were present.

- Learned from Town Manager Rocco Longo that Duxbury will receive \$68,000 more in state aid than it had planned on. Longo level funded the state aid portion of the FY05 budget, while local legislators predicted towns should cut this figure by five to ten percent. The state "cherry sheet" shows aid to Duxbury at \$3.782 million. In Longo's budget, it is \$3.715 million.

- Stated they never sent a letter regarding the pending strike at Pilgrim nuclear plant in Plymouth because the dispute was settled the day after they voted to write to plant owner Entergy, the unions and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

- Voted to appoint DPW Director Tom Daley and new Water/Sewer Superintendent Paul Anderson to the reformed Marshfield-Duxbury Sewer Agreement Administrative Committee. This committee's purpose is to interpret and enforce the two towns' sewer agreement and to amend or modify it. This committee last met in 1992. The agreement dates to 1977 and runs out in 2007.

- Approved a wedding ceremony at Bay Farm on

October 10 from 2:30 – 3:30 p.m. Molly Connelly will wed Joseph Coven.

- Approved two block parties on September 18, one on Buckboard Rd. and one on Chandler Mill Drive.

- Approved a one-day liquor license for Bayside Marine on August 14 for its annual fishing tournament banquet.

- Approved a one-day liquor license for the Alden Kindred of America on September 27.

- Appointed the following people to the Community Preservation Committee: Conservation Commission member Holly Morris, Planning Board member George Wadsworth, and Historical Commission member Nancy Bennett.

- Appointed the following people to the new Local Housing Partnership: Selectman Andre Martecchini, Planning Board member Rob Wilson, Housing Authority member Brendan Keohan, Board of Health member John Day, Conservation Commissioner Barbara Kelley, Council on Aging member Bill Campbell, and citizens Charles Rourke, Diane Bartlett, Lane Partridge, and William "Bud" Childs.

- Appointed police officer Thomas Johnson to the Highway Safety Committee.